



Role of students in enhancing quality of education in developing countries

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LETTER TO EDITOR

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To the Editor

There has been great debate on rationale for the initiation of five years Pharm.D program in Pakistan. With prerequisite clinical pharmacy clerkship, lack of hospital pharmacy and qualified and experienced preceptors in the country has been point of discussion for so long^{1, 2}. Pharmacy program is a mixture of a variety of major subjects and pharmacy teachers are responsible to synchronize these different fields for the ease of students³. At the same time Pharmacy teachers in Pakistan are of the view that being a continually developing field, pharmacy curriculum and its effectiveness should be regularly revised and monitored to fulfill major national needs to produce competent pharmacists⁴. Educational standard has many dimensions and achievement testing plays a prominent role in determining the existing standards in education. Higher education commission of Pakistan has recently formulated Quality Enhancement Agency and has asked all national higher education institutes to establish Quality enhancement cells (QEC) to monitor and modify the higher education and learning within the institutes⁵.

The QEC uses some survey forms filled by students and teachers for quality assurance. As a coordinator for QEC, I have personally experienced that students can be best narrator of quality of education of an institute if they take the survey forms seriously. Unfortunately there is a generalized lack of awareness among pharmacy students for the importance and utilization of these survey forms.

The non serious attitude of these students causes difficulty in measuring and monitoring the quality of education by the QEC team and has an equal opportunity to yield a negative response. I feel that Pharmacy students need to be aware about the significance of their responses to these surveys.

There should be awareness sessions about *survey responding* at the commencement of their pharmacy education in a higher education institute. At the same time pharmacy students should fill the questionnaires and survey forms periodically during five years of education and improvements should be made in quality of education and other aspects of institute on the basis of their responses. There is also a need to develop sense of responsibility among these students to bring and improve quality in education by any tool one of which is responding with seriousness to these questionnaires.

Education quality is a summation of input, process and outcome factors and we need to collect information to make useful and meaningful decision for the status of quality education by now and for its improvement in future to meet the standards. Besides teachers, pharmacy students should be educated about their role in achievement, maintenance and improvement of quality of education at their institutes.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Authors contributed equally to all aspects of the study.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no competing interests